G. R. S. 58]

Previous references.

1

File No. 80-15

Serial Nos.

1915-16
(EAG)

Later references. —

Mily 235-16 Sls 1-3.
Mily 181-16 Sl no 1.
Mily 184-17 Sl no 1
Mily 455-18.

P

GENERAL AND REVENUE SECRETARIAT.

P 37

Serial Nos.

Part B for

SUBJECT.

Note on the System of Management of the Amrit Mahal Dept - its defects and possible remedies.

W D 1351—GPB—20,000—13-12-15

G.R.S. 11] 1915-16

GENERAL AND REVENUE SECRETARIAT.

(G.A.B.)

NOTES.

File No. 90-15

FILE HEADING.

Amrut Mahal Department.

From

No.	Dated	Received

Diary No.	Enclos.	Spare Copies.	Serial No.

BRIEF ABSTRACT OF LETTER.

NOTES AND ORDERS.

A note on the system of management of the Amrut mahal Department — its defects and possible remedies — has been prepared from the printed & other papers available in the Secretariat and is

GPB—35,000—15-6-12

G. R. S. 12]

General and Revenue Secretariat. | File No. 46 of ~~1915~~.

Serial No.

Submitted for consideration.

Secretary) 26/11/15

Mr N. Madhava Rao's Note appears to me to be well considered and calls for further definite action.

Mr Shamanna is preparing another Note (Financial aspect) with his dept.

As soon as this is received, the Supt of the Amrita Mahal may be consulted and the questions raised may be duly considered in Council.

Standing member Revenue) 7/12 7/12

I agree.

30.12.15.

3/12/15 3/12

3447 6.1.16.

I also concur.

After the report and views of the Amrit Mahal Superintendent are received, it may be necessary to appoint a small Committee to submit suitable recommendations for practical action after taking into account the administrative and financial considerations involved, the future

GPB—20,000—30-6-15

Serial No.

requirements of the department and the needs of the people of the tracts concerned.

Early orders seem necessary on the question of throwing open surplus lands for cultivation. This question may be dealt with independently in a separate file.

20.1.16

Extract to be separately submitted. Draw 21/1

This may be done in 7 days at the latest. 22/1

Attended to

As VIII will kindly give personal attention to this matter to avoid delay. Draw 21/1

Secy. No. 1372 fls. Forwarded to Br II for favour of the note referred to in para graph 8 being kindly put up, if ready 22/1

Subd. 26.1.16. Please see routine note - Br II was asked to prepare a Valuation Statement for 10 years - This was done and the Statement sent to Br V about 12-12-'15 "

Br VIII) 27-1-16

Br V for kindly putting up the papers which will be sent after reference 28/1

13 Papers Files liked hereto. to be kindly returned with Early action with reference to Secy's order on File Misl 147-15

29/1-16

Secy. 847-15

NOTE—Contn. sheet.

GPB—70,000—17-12-15

G R. S. 12]

General and Revenue Secretariat.

E & H (G) File No. 80 of 191 .

Serial No.

With reference to paragraph 7 it is submitted that since a committee is proposed to be appointed for considering the questions dealt with in Mily file 14) of 1915 & connected files, the same committee may be asked to examine the proposals made in my note

Secy)
Mo. Port)

31/1/16

1/2-16

Vide Secretary's note 31/5/16. in Mily file No 147-15.

NOTE—Contn. sheet.

GPB—20,000—30-6-15

THE AMRUT MAHAL DEPARTMENT

The Amrut Mahal system of management-its defects.

Some of the defects inherent in the system of Amrut Mahal management are graphically described in a letter written in 1838 by a British Officer in charge of the Department, extracts from which are appended to this note. Though these defects have been sought to be removed on many an occasion, they subsist more or less unchanged to the present day. They are largely the outcome of the idea, once prevalent, that economy consists in minimising disbursements from the public treasury even if this result is secured by the unprofitable employment of large tracts of lands. The servegar is less a public servant in the ordinary sense of the term receiving defined emoluments than a contractor to whom certain lands are leased on condition that he will maintain a herd of Government cattle, and so long as this condition is fulfilled, he is at liberty to do what he chooses with the land at his disposal. Certain restrictions are imposed in the interests of Government, but these restrictions are generally inoperative in practice

practice and do not materially curtail the servegar's absolute powers over the kavals in his charge. This will be clear when the perquisites of the servegar are considered individually.

Servegar's perquisites.

" Terige "

2. By this is meant that a portion of the kaval is set apart for the use of the cattle of a neighbouring village on the understanding that the villagers will pay a specified fee and help the servegar with small services required for the protection of Government cattle. The servegar's profit in regard to this item consists in the fact firstly, that he is permitted to collect the fees and retain a portion of the proceeds and secondly, that the terige lands, being undefined, can be curtailed or enlarged at the servegar's pleasure.

Grazing cattle in the kaval.

3. The second item of the profit is the privilege of grazing private cattle along with cattle belonging to Government in the portion of the kaval reserved for the latter. The rule is that the private cattle thus grazed should not

not exceed in number 30 per cant of the strength of the Government herd; but the enforcement of this limitation must in practice be very difficult.

Sale of stubble grass.

4. The third and perhaps - largest source of income to the servegar consists in the privilege of leasing the stubble grass during the period that it is not required for Government cattle. This period is said to cover the months of June and July, but as Government cattle rarely remain in any kaval more than 50 or 60 days (and in the generality of cases for a much shorter period) it is obvious that the servegar must have the disposal of the kaval for considerably over two months.

The kavalgars like the servegars receive no cash remuneration. They are given assignments of land known as Talab kavals, the enjoyment of which seems to be unrestricted. The Talab kavals like the terige lands are not demarcated by visible boundaries and their extent is in practice subject to the regulation of the - servegars.

Abuses.

5. In addition to these acknowledged perquisites, the amrut mahal subordinates are generally credited with the enjoyment of certain surreptitious advantages which whether they profit them or not in proportion are a source of some loss to the State.

Milking.

6. The first of these is the milking of the cows. The existence of this practice and the evils arising from it are described in Major Davidson's letter quoted above and his remarks are by no means exaggerated.

Cattle droppings.

7. The second consists in the removal of cattle droppings. The servegars are by rule permitted to take these droppings from the cattle pens but not from the other portions of the kavals. It is unlikely that any nice discrimination of this kind will be exercised in practice or that the kavals will get the benefit of the manure so necessary for their continued fertility.

Concealement of births.

8. The third source of loss arises from the concealment of births. One would think that the branding of cattle and other precautions must have minimised this evil to a large extent, but the conspicuous fall in the reported birth rate of the cattle in the period subsequent to the resumption of the management by Mysore Government points (unless it can be shown to be due to other causes) to the opposite conclusion. The average birth rate during the period in question and certain portions thereof is exhibited below and contrasted with the birth rate under previous management:-

Average birth rate from

1867-1880-81	..	50.21 per cent
1882 to 1914	..	41.17 "
1882 to 1886-7	..	49.69 "
1887-8 to 1891-2	..	38.60 "
1892-3 to 1896-7	..	34.85 "
1897-8 to 1901-2	..	41.01 "
1902-3 to 1906-7	..	36.92 "
1907-8 to 1911-12	..	47.4 "
1912-13 to 1913-14	..	37.45 "

It will be observed that the percentage of the period 1867-1881 ~~1867~~ has never been regained since, and

and that excepting the quinquinnium 1907-08 to 1911-12, the fall in birth rate has been very considerable.

Summary of defects.

9. The disadvantages arising from the present system of management are various:-

Firstly, the system necessitates the retention of a much larger extent of land than is absolutely required, for the use of the cattle establishment. In alloting grazing land provision has to be made not only for the legitimate requirements of the Government cattle but for the remuneration, legitimate and otherwise, of the subordinates.

Secondly, Government are prevented from knowing definitely the price that they pay for the services of their Amrut Mahal servants and for maintaining a cattle breeding establishment. The annual accounts - generally show an excess of receipts over expenditure but this result is quite illusory as no account is taken of the assessment on the lands that the Government would have obtained by giving them out for cultivation, &c.

Thirdly, the subordinates of the Department are vested with wide discretionary powers which are capable of abuse.

Fourthly, the extensiveness of the grazing grounds renders anything in the nature of effective supervision impossible.

Measures of reform.

10. How far these defects can be remedied is a matter for consideration. Here attention may be invited to certain reforms which have been projected in the past but which for one reason or another have not been proceeded with.

Abolition or restriction of perquisites.

11. To begin with, we must consider the possibility of abolishing perquisites and introducing a money system of remuneration. The objection generally raised to this is that it will be prohibitively costly, but the comparative cost of the two systems does not appear to have been worked out and the conclusions as to their comparative economy are largely conjectural. However that may be, the matter is one worth investigation.

12. Even if it be found as the result of such investigation that the wholesale abolition of the present system of perquisites is inexpedient and impracticable, there can be no doubt as to the desirability of defining and curtailing them.

13. To this end the following measures seem necessary:-

Abolition of "terige."

(1) The abolition of the "Terige System". In Government Order No. R 5202-7858-04-3 dated the 13th Dec 1904 Government observed that this system was capable of being turned into a source of oppression to villagers and of dishonest gain to kavalgars and in order to prevent this, directed that terige lands should be defined and demarcated by proper boundaries. The total abolition of the system was not considered feasible probably because it was thought that the Department would be thereby deprived of the help of the villagers in recovering strayed cattle, putting up sheds, &c. But these services are of too trivial a character to make their deprivation a matter of great moment.

Demarcation of umbli lands.

(2) The demarcation of umbli lands - The necessity for this is obvious and has also been recognised in the Government order quoted above.

Discontinuance of private grazing

(3) Discontinuance of the practice of private cattle grazing along with Government cattle - The advantage of this arrangement is said to lie in the facility which it affords to the Department to recoup losses of cattle by taking substitutes from the servegars' herd. It is not clear however, why recoupment cannot be made with equal ease if the servegars' cattle graze elsewhere.

Abolition of the right of disposing of surplus grass.

(4) Abolition of the servegars' right to dispose of surplus grazing - It was sought at one time to restrict this right by demanding from the servegar a certain rent, but the servegars on the plea of reimbursing themselves, sublet the kavals without consideration for the interests of Government and the arrangement did not work well. If the grazing of the kavals is leased to the villagers directly and without the intervention of servegars, it is possible that better results will be obtained.

Money payments.

14. For the deprivation of these perquisites, the servegars and the sub ordinates must be compensated by - money salaries or by an addition to their "talab" where necessary. The object is not of course to make the men work for nothing, but to define and bring to reasonable proportions the remuneration they get under the present elusive system.

Release of kaval land for cultivation.

15. By these measures it is expected that a fairly large extent of kaval land will be released for purposes of cultivation. And this is no small benefit when the difficulty now experienced for new land fit for the plough is considered. The Amrut Mahal system may have admirably suited days when land was valueless and - labour scarce, but now when these conditions no longer exist, its continuance on the old lines has become a source of inconvenience. What with the increase of cultivation in recent times(the cultivated area has nearly doubled during the past 40 years) and the afforestation of large tracts, the scope for the expansion of cultivation has greatly diminished. Any measures calculated to make more land available for the use of the people will therefore be greatly appreciated and will

will meet a genuine want.

16. That the Amrut Mahal Department could not be permitted to retain for an indefinite time the vast tracts of lands under its control was seen long ago. In 1894 Government passed an order (G.O.No.12817-26/R.1346 - dated 3rd February 1894) declaring that the claims of cultivation must have precedence over the requirements of the Amrut Mahal and directing that any kaval really needed by the people for cultivation should be disposed of for that purpose if the Department would not be inconvenienced thereby. This order, though several kavals have been relinquished in accordance with its terms, left each case to be dealt with on its merits and thus had in it an element of haphazardness.

Essentials of a satisfactory arrangement.

17. In order to evolve an arrangement that would combine comprehensiveness with some degree of finality, several preliminaries have to be settled.

18. In the first place, the annual requirements as regards cattle both for military and for agricultural purposes must be determined and the

the strength of the cattle establishment necessary for giving the requisite annual supply should be worked out. In the annual report for 1887-88 an attempt is made in this direction, viz., to fix the average strength necessary to give 200 steers annually (which was the number then stipulated for) but the correctness of the calculation is open to question and it is not known how far it has been borne out by subsequent experience. And in any case the cessation of the contract with the British Government has considerably altered the circumstances, so that the whole matter requires to be carefully reconsidered.

Mr.Piggott remarked in 1900 "On the assumption that the total herd required to give 400 good steers up to 1887-8 was of correct average strength, the herds after 1887-88 required to produce 200 steers appear to be much over strength. I do not guarantee the statistics or profess to write on the subject with any authority; but I suggest that the statistics both as to cattle and otherwise are noteworthy. Possibly too the minimum strength of the herd required to give 200 good bulls has not yet been thoroughly gone into".

19. In the second place, the quantity of grazing land required per head must be determined. This can of course be only an approximation and may vary from District to District and even from kaval to kaval; but unless it is fixed, we shall be without a working hypothesis. In 1870, the Sub Assistant Commissary General in charge of the Amrut Mahal wrote "From old records in my possession, I find that about 7 acres of ordinary natural pasturage will keep an animal for a

a year, but" he added, "the data on which this estimate is formed are not on record". In the report for 1886 allusion is made to a "system of closely checking the period during which each kaval is grazed whereby, a much more accurate estimate can be made of the grazing required than has been possible hitherto". It does not appear that this system has ever been tried.

20. Then there is the question how far the fodder required can be grown under some system of cultivation The eventual necessity for such an arrangement was pointed out by Government in the order quoted already but no practical steps appear to have been taken to inaugurate it.

21. It is not till all these points are settled that the extent of land which the Department could afford to relinquish could be determined with certainty. And this has to be done, if the present fortuitous methods which regulate the throwing open of Amrut Mahal kavals for cultivation should cease.

Scope for the curtailment of the kavals.

22. It may be thought that the Amrut Mahal Department has already

already relinquished as much of its grazing grounds as it could do without inconvenience and that no scope exists for their further curtailment. But that this is not the case will be clear from the statements even of Amrut Mahal Officers. In a report dated 11th September 1876, it is stated that according to the system followed in the Department which has not much altered since, Government cattle get at the very most one-quarter of the grazing available, the rest being purloined or wasted. The present Amrut Mahal Superintendent observed in his annual report for 1909-10 "It is true that the Department still possesses an extensive area. But the major portion of this is hilly and barren and the remainder one-eighth perhaps of what is in possession of the Department is the only portion really useful for the grazing of Government cattle". Even if we regard the estimates above quoted, as expressions of opinions implying no exactitude, we cannot avoid coming to the conclusion that a large extent of land is unnecessarily retained by the Department to the prejudice of the general interests of the country.

Particulars of the Hissar farm- a comparison.

23. The following particulars regarding the Hissar Cattle Farm are extracted from Voelcker's Report on -

on Agriculture. They show that a cattle establishment almost as large as ours and reared for the greater part on natural pasturage manages with one-tenth the area at the disposal of the Amrut Mahal. Circumstances here are of course in several respects different, but the similarity is no less striking and affords a further reason for carefully considering the need for the very expensive grazing lands possessed by the Amrut Mahal Department.

24. "The Farm covers 67 square miles in all, and has about 7,000 head of cattle on it. About 350 head are supplied yearly to Commissariat Department. In addition, from 70 to 80 bulls are sold annually for agricultural purposes. On a farm of such extent there is almost unlimited grazing ground, but the grass is seemingly very poor and thin. It is only on spots where water lodges that enough grass grows to afford a cutting. There is another difficulty, that of procuring water.

"Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the Farm appeared to me to be capitally managed and the stock bred on it were unquestionably fine

The calves were left alone in the yards during the day but had their mothers with them at night; the latter were not stall fed at all during the rains but simply grazed throughout the day and the fact that they were able to support themselves and their calves too is a proof of how much the grass, unpromising as it looked, could do for them".

The policy of the Department-as regards the improvement of the country breed of cattle-unduly subordinated to Military requirements.

25.So much for the system of management. The other question proposed to be considered relates to the aims and policy of the Department. In the olden times and not till very long ago, the Department was only concerned with producing cattle required by the army and felt no call to do anything directly useful to the people. This is well illustrated by the following classification of the cattle of the Department:- First class, for the guns. Second class, for the Borbudary or Sepoys kubories,&c Third class, small size for making sircar cultivation. Fourth class,lame and blind sold to the ryots".

26. The ideas reflected in this arrangement subsisted more or less unaltered till the disestablishment of the Department. It was only on its revival in 1866 that the Department began to be

be considered as an agency for improving the cattle resources of the country. With this view, arrangements were made for the Amrut Mahal Department which was then under the control of British Military authorities, handing over a certain number of bulls every year for distribution to the ryots. Military demands for Amrut Mahal cattle underwant gradual reduction till they ceased altogether in 1906-07 when the contract with the British Government expired. The chief object for which the Department had hitherto existed thus ceased, but it was decided to continue the Department in order that it might be used as the means of improving the breed of cattle in the country.

27. But Military indents [illegible] were soon revived chiefly from the Transport Corps which had in the meantime changed pony for bullock draught. It is also understood that fresh proposals for the renewal of the contract with British authorities are under consideration.

28. The re-organization of the Transport Corps into a bullock train was, of course, a happy idea and it

it enabled the State to utilise its famous establishment of cattle for purposes of imperial defence, but the renewal of the obligation to supply bullocks to the British Military - stands on a somewhat different footing. From what has been stated in the - earlier part of the note it will be clear that the Amrut Mahal system of cattle breeding is not an economical one, and any arrangement for the supply of bullocks can only be carried out at some sacrifice to the State. But this would be a small consideration; the real disadvantage lies in the fact that in the event of such an arrangement being decided upon, the energies of the Amrut Mahal Department would be exhausted in meeting the somewhat exacting standards of the Military authorities, and that the policy of improving the breed of cattle in the country, imperfect even at present as will presently be seen, would receive a serious setback.

Measures for improving the breed of cattle.

29. The methods now adopted to improve the breed of cattle are threefold:-

(1) Sale of bulls to ryots on concessionary terms through District Boards.

(2) Sale by auction or by private negotiation of male calves which might be brought up by ryots and used for breeding purposes.

(3) Experiments with a view to determining the type of animal most suited for dairy and yoke purposes.

30. A few remarks on each of these measures will show how far they are calculated to secure the object in view.

Sale of bulls at concessionary rates.

Sale of bulls through District Boards:-The following remarks of the Superintendent, Amrut Mahal Department will show that this measure has not been attended with success. "Very few persons come forward and take advantage of the privilege extended to them, though in some cases they apply for and even obtain the sanction of Government".

"The supplying grown-up bulls to Local Fund Board is a failure". These observations are fully borne out by the annual reports of District Boards, which show that there are in all only 12 bulls supplied under the terms of this concession.

The failure of the scheme is attributed and rightly to the semi-wild method of rearing Amrut Mahal - bulls which renders them reluctant to associate with country cows. As Mr. Nanjundaraj Urs observes, they become timid as soon as nose strings are used and refuse to cover.

Sale of male calves to be brought up by ryots for breeding purposes.

31. It was partly to remove this difficulty that the second measure, viz. of selling calves at an early age was adopted. This of course has the effect of domesticating the bulls, but it encourages their use at an immature age. The inexpediency of this measure will be understood when it is remembered that one of the greatest obstacles to the improvement of the breed of cattle in this country is the use of undeveloped bulls.

If then grown-up Amrut Mahal bulls cannot be used at all, and if the use of immature bulls is attended with undesirable consequences, the remedy lies in the Department itself rearing and domesticating bulls for issue to the ryots at the proper age and in a condition of moderate tameness. This will, of course, mean more expense to

to Government, but it seems the only way in which the Department can improve the breed of cattle in the country.

Experiments for fixing a proper type.

32. The third measure consists in experiments made for the purpose of fixing a type of animal suitable to the requirements of the Mysore ryot, a type the cows of which shall be good milkers and the bulls good plough and draught cattle.

It is doubtful if the experiments are being carried on in a manner calculated to give tangible results. It seems the breeding establishment was started in 1912 with one bull and nine cows of the amrut mahal breed and that now the cows give "from two to three seers of milk per day in the early milking period". The result seems at first sight disappointing but only an expert can speak of the need and adequacy of the experiment and the correctness of the lines on which it is carried on.

Creation of private kavals.

33. There is one more point to notice in connection with the subject of improving the breed of cattle.

cattle. The Amrut Mahal Department by placing large tracts of lands at the disposal of the servegars, has indirectly helped to keep up a class of private breeders And if the perquisites of the subordinates are abolished or curtailed, one powerful though illicit source of encouragement to the private breeding of cattle would be withdrawn. But this might be made good by legitimate means by following the suggestions of Sir James Gordon in disposing of such of the resumed Amrut Mahal kavals as are not very decidedly required for cultivation. These were Sir James Gordon's remarks on the subject in his well known minute about the Amrut Mahal Department. "Should any of the kavals be hereafter given up by Amrut Mahal and not required by the Mysore State use, there need be no occasion to break them up and given them out for cultivation. It would be more advantageous to the public interest and would indeed meet an existing want if each of such kavals were sold, as a whole, to the highest bidder, subject to the permanent rent of half the survey assessment, in order to encourage farming and the breeding of cattle by substantial ryots and other private individuals".

The Sheep Farm.

34. The Amrut Mahal Department maintain a sheep farm for improving the breed of sheep in the country. As to the success of this undertaking, the annual reports give somewhat contradictory evidence. In the review on the report for 1906-07 Government observed that they regretted "to note that the sheep farms are not proving very useful and that the ryots are averse to borrowing rams for breeding purposes". On the succeeding year's report, which was in a different strain, Government noted that ryots were "showing great interest in using the rams supplied by the Department". But this interest was apparently shortlived as in the report for 1912-13 once again it is stated, "every attempt was made to induce ryots to take rams free of cost to improve the fleece of their flocks, but somehow or other they are averse to do so. Even the kavalgars and others of the Department were induced to take rams but they have no liking for they say that there is no demand for such nice fleece among them. When ryots have such ideas, there is no use of keeping such a large number in stock".

35. These extracts will show the necessity of making a close scrutiny

scrutiny of the circumstances which have stood in the way of success, so that if possible, the lines of the experiment might be changed or the experiment itself, if useless, discontinued.

36. Summary

1. The amrut mahal system of management is based on the principle that public services may be more economically and satisfactorily remunerated by privileges connected with the use of land than by the disbursement of cash salaries. Whatever the validity of this principle in olden days when land had little value, it cannot be admitted at the present time, at any rate not to the same extent. The following are the disadvantages associated with the present system:-

(a) It necessitates large areas of land being kept out of cultivation and other profitable employment.

(b) It furnishes no means of ascertaining the cost of the establishment and therefore of checkin possible extravagance.

(c) It gives the subordinates of the Department large powers for peculation and oppression.

(d) It renders effective super-vision impossible.

2. The remedies proposed are the abolition or at any rate the strict definition of the perquisites. If they cannot be done away with altogether, they should at least be restricted to defined portions of kavals.

The terige lands should be demarcated and excluded from the kavals altogether, their management being left to the Revenue Department.

The umbli lands should be de-marcated.

The right of kavalgars grazing their cattle along with Government cattle and of selling surplus grass should be stopped.

Enquiry should be made to ascertain and if possible, to put down abuses in regard to the milking of cows, the removal of manure, and the reporting of births.

The land at the disposal of the Department is in excess of its requirements, but the excess cannot be stated with any approach to accuracy till the requirements of the Department are more definitely ascertained. To this end it is necessary to determine:-

(1) The number of cattle required annually to meet military and agricultural needs.

(2) On the basis of the last, the strength of the establishment.

(3) The quantity of grazing land required per head of cattle.

(4) The possibility of growing fodder by means of cultivation.

3. As regards policy, though th necessity of improving the breed of cattle in the country has been full recognised, there is a possibility of its being ignored, firstly, throu the growth of the military demands for cattle from outside the State and secondly, through inadequate and faulty methods.

The present methods are:-

(1) the sale of grown up bulls on concessionary terms,

(2) the sale of young male calves to be brought up by ryots and used for breeding purposes,

(3) experiments to fix a suitable type of cattle.

The first is said to have proved a failure because the bulls are not domesticated sufficiently early and do not cover when nose ropes are used.

The second avoids this difficulty but at the very heavy sacrifice of quality involved in the use of immature bulls.

The domestication of bulls by the Department itself and their sale at the proper age and in a state of moderate tameness is suggested as the remedy. The number of bulls to be thus sold every year should be fixed.

Regarding the third point, the need for the experiment and the correctness of the lines on which it is proceeding are matters for expert investigation.

The breed of cattle may also be improved by selling a portion of the relinquished kavals on a special "Hulgaval" tenure.

The attempts made to improve the breed of sheep do not appear to be successful and should be enquired into, so that if their failure is due to removable faults, necessary action might be taken to rectify them.

APPENDIX

Extracts from a letter written in 1838 by a British officer in - charge of the Amrut Mahal Department.

- - - - - -

" You are aware that the servegars have hitherto enjoyed the contract for the Terigee lands, or those parts of the kavals which are allotted for the subsistence of the cattle of the neighbouring villages. As a consequence of this arrangement, all the kavalgars of the Department, though receiving their appointment from this office, have hitherto been selected and paid by the servegars, and may therefore be considered to have been almost entirely under their control and influence.

The servegars are, I believe, almost universally owners of considerable herds of cattle, amounting, I have reason to think, in not a few instances, to an equal number with the Government herds entrusted to their charge. Their influence over the kavalgars being necessarily so great, it is far from being - improbable, indeed it may almost be

be assumed, that the servegars' cattle have had free access to all parts of the kavals, and consumed no inconsiderable portion of the grass which ought to have been entirely reserved for the company's herds. It is scarcely to be doubted, that men so circumstanced would, in a season of scarcity, consult the wants of their own cattle in preference to those of the Government herds especially as detection would be rendered extremely difficult by the devotion of their interests of the kavalgars and by the great distance from the farm of most of the kavals.

I am therefore, I think, justified in assuming that the distress and consequent mortality amongst the Government cattle in times of draught and scarcity, must have been much aggravated by the misappropriation of their means of subsistence to the wants of the servegars' cattle; and that if the contract of the kavals, and the consequent payment of the kavalgars, should still be left in their hands, it will be impracticable to guard against continued malversation. Not only the kavalgars but also the graziers and other attendants of the herds have hitherto been selected by

by the servegars, and therefore must have been much under their influence; thus affording additional facilities to fraud, and diminishing the chance of detection.

The appointment of servegar would appear to have been hitherto considered as almost an hereditary one, for in most cases the same herds have remained in charge of the same family from father to son, for a great number of years. Thus whatever abuses and malpractices may have been resorted to by one of the family have been doubtless communicated to and perpetuated by his descendents; and the family cattle, secured in their increase by the malversations of the father, have together with the care of the Government herds, descended to the son a kind of hereditary incentive to fraud.

The reports of my predecessors in the charge had led me to believe that the young calves enjoyed the whole of the milk given by the cows, and that none was ever taken from the latter for any other purpose whatever. Indeed, on the occasion of an inspection of some herds in 1836, when a small quantity of milk was required, and ordered to be

be taken from one of the cows, I was assured that none was procurable, as not a cow would allow itself to be milked. I was therefore much surprised to learn, in November 1837, that the attendants present with the herds, usually from 10 to 12 in number with each, had always been in the habit of taking sufficient milk for their own consumption, and that they considered themselves authorised to do so by an implied permission from this office.

It is unnecessary for me to particularise the abuses almost certain to arise from such a practice; for I am of opinion that it would be much less difficult to prevent the attendants from taking any milk at all, than to limit in any manner the quantity they might be disposed to take under such an alleged permission as the above. Should the complaints which, two years ago, were made by officers of Artillery, of the deterioration in point of height of the Amrut Mahal cattle, prove to have been well-founded, I shall be disposed to attribute it in a great measure to the abuse of the practice in question, while the very great mortality which has always taken place among the young calves in the first year after birth, may fairly be